

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Final Office Action mailed on May 2, 2006. Claims 1, 23, 24, 46, and 47 have been amended. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

A Request for Continued Examination is submitted herewith. Please charge deposit account number 02-1818 to cover the cost of the Request for Continued Examination and any other fees due in connection with this response.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1 to 47 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0216162 to Vancura ("Vancura") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,309,300 to Glavich ("Glavich"). Applicants respectfully disagree with these rejections. Nevertheless, Applicants have amended certain of the claims for clarification purposes.

Vancura discloses a gaming device which includes a game, wherein a player receives a number of opportunities to pick selections from a plurality of masked selections. Each of the masked selections is associated with a hidden attribute, such as a credit value award, a multiplier, or a number of additional picks. Some of the selections may be associated with more than one attribute (i.e., a selection may be associated with both a credit value award and a number of additional picks). In operation, the gaming device provides the player with an initial number of picks and enables the player to select any one of the masked selections using one of the provided picks. The gaming device reveals the attribute(s) associated with the picked selection and provides the revealed attribute(s) to the player. Once a selection is picked and the associated attribute or attributes are revealed, that selection is no longer available for selection (See Paragraph [0023]).

For example, in Vancura, if the gaming device provides the player with three initial picks in the game, the player uses the first pick to select a selection, and is then left with two picks remaining. If the picked selection is associated with a credit award and a number of additional picks (e.g., 2 additional picks), the revealed attributes are provided to the player, so that the player now has 4 picks remaining in the game (i.e.,

the 3 initial picks, minus the 1 picked used to select the selection, plus the 2 additional picks awarded). Thus, after each selection is picked, the gaming device provides the player with the associated credit award and (as appropriate) the additional picks (See Paragraph [0024]). The player continues to pick selections until there are no opportunities remaining in the game.

Glavich discloses a gaming device which includes a bonus game having a plurality of selections which are displayed to a player. Each of the selections is associated with an item, such as a prize amount, a demerit, a number of additional picks, or a multiplier. The player receives an initial number of picks with which to select a certain number of the selections. For each of the provided picks, the player selects one of the selections which has not previously been picked (Col. 6, lines 19 to 20). After the player picks a selection, the gaming device reveals the item (if any) associated with the picked selection. The gaming device then implements the item in the bonus game. For example, if a picked selection is associated with a prize, the gaming device increments the prize total for the bonus game by the associated prize amount. If the picked selection is associated with one or more additional picks, the gaming device increments the number of picks remaining in the bonus game by the appropriate amount. If the selected selection is associated with a multiplier, the gaming device multiplies all of the previously selected items by the multiplier. If a selected selection is associated with a demerit, the gaming device decreases the prize amount by the appropriate amount (See Col. 6, lines 36 to 46). The player continues selecting selections until there are no picks remaining.

The Office Action states that Vancura does not teach, disclose or suggest displaying the accumulation of a plurality of the components (See Office Action, page 4). The Office Action attempts to remedy the deficiencies of Vancura with Glavich. The Office Action concludes that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to include displaying the accumulation of the various awards, as purportedly taught by Glavich, in the gaming device of Vancura in order to inform the player of the currently obtained awards.

Applicants respectfully submit that, regardless of whether it would have been obvious to modify Vancura in the manner proposed by the Office Action, the combination of Vancura and Glavich does not teach every element or render obvious a gaming device which includes an accumulated award opportunity generated by accumulating one or more of the award components during a play of the game, wherein the accumulation of the award components includes combining any one of the award components to any previously accumulated award components in said play of the game, and wherein said accumulation of said award components is adapted to be displayed to the player.

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Office Action alleges that the accumulated award opportunity in Vancura is a globe associated with a number of additional picks which are added to the player's current number of remaining picks in the game. However, even assuming that Vancura includes an accumulated award opportunity as interpreted by the Office Action, such accumulated award opportunity is not generated by accumulating one or more of the award components during a play of the game, wherein the accumulation of the award components includes combining any one of the award components to any previously accumulated award components in the play of the game.

The gaming device of Vancura ascribes award components such as a credit value and/or an additional number of picks to each of the globes before the player selects any of the globes. Therefore, each of the award opportunities in the game is determined prior to the player selecting any of the globes and obtaining (or accumulating) the associated award components.

Moreover, when the player selects a globe in Vancura, the player obtains any award component(s) associated with the selected globe right away. For example, if the player selects a globe associated with a number of additional picks, the gaming device immediately adds that number of additional picks to the player's remaining picks in the game. Accumulating picks in this manner merely tracks the number of picks that the

player possesses at any point during the game and does not contribute to generating an accumulated award opportunity.

On the other hand, in the gaming device of amended independent Claim 1, the accumulated award opportunity is generated by accumulating one or more of the award components during a play of the game, wherein the accumulation of the award components includes combining any one of the award components to any previously accumulated award components in said play of the game, and wherein said accumulation of said award components is adapted to be displayed to the player. The gaming device subsequently indicates at least two award opportunities to the player, including the accumulated award opportunity generated in the play of the game and enables the player to choose one of the indicated award opportunities. The player obtains an outcome after choosing between the indicated award opportunities.

Thus, unlike amended independent Claim 1, Vancura does not teach, disclose, or suggest a gaming device which includes an accumulated award opportunity generated by accumulating one or more of the award components during a play of the game, wherein the accumulation of the award components includes combining any one of the award components to any previously accumulated award components in said play of the game, and wherein said accumulation of said award components is adapted to be displayed to the player. Similarly, adding Glavich to Vancura does not render obvious a gaming device which includes this element. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are each patentably distinguished over the combination of Vancura and Glavich.

Amended independent Claims 24 and 47 each include certain similar elements to amended independent Claim 1. For reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to amended independent Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claims 24 and 47 and the claims depending therefrom are each patentably distinguished over the combination of Vancura and Glavich.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for allowance and is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions related to this Response, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned to discuss this Response.

Respectfully submitted,

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